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Abbreviation in the *Ekottarika-āgama*

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Abstract:

The present article surveys the employment of textual abbreviation in the first six fascicles of the *Ekottarika-āgama* extant in Chinese translation (T 125) and considers in more detail the need to avoid assuming too easily that an abbreviation without a marker has occurred.

Keywords:

Abbreviation, *Ekottarika-āgama*, Oral Transmission, *peyyāla*, *peyyāla*.

Introduction

In what follows I study the employment of abbreviation in the first six fascicles of the Chinese *Ekottarika-āgama* (T 125),¹ building on previous explorations of the same topic in the first five fascicles of the *Madhyama-āgama* (T 26) and of the *Samyukta-āgama* (T 99) preserved in Chinese translation.²

I. Abbreviation in the *Ekottarika-āgama*

The occurrence of abbreviation in the *Ekottarika-āgama* extant in Chinese can best be surveyed by noting cases where no abbreviation has occurred, where abbreviation has occurred and has been marked, and where abbreviation has been applied without an explicit marker.

I.1 Lack of Abbreviation

The first few discourses in the *Ekottarika-āgama* show a reluctance to use abbreviation similar to what is evident in the beginning parts of the *Madhyama-āgama* (Anālayo 2021a: 24). This is particularly evident in the case of the first ten discourses (EĀ 2.1 to 2.10), which employ basically the same text to describe single things that should be cultivated, differing only insofar as the treatment is applied to different meditation practices. The first such case concerns recollection of the Buddha.³ The full text of this discourse recurs in exactly the same way another nine times without any abbreviation, the only difference being that the “Buddha” (佛) as the object of such mindfulness comes to be replaced by the Dharma (法),

¹ As the first fascicle has relatively little actual text, I have expanded the scope of my survey to the first six fascicles in order to cover roughly the same amount of material as taken up in my other two studies; my survey therefore begins at T II 552c9 and goes up to T II 576a6.

² Anālayo 2020 and 2021a; the research was stimulated by remarks made by Skilling 2013: 122n17 and 2017: 292.

³ EĀ 2.1 at T II 552c9.

the Community (眾), morality (戒), generosity (施), celestials (天), stilling (休息), breathing (安般), the impermanence of the body (身非常),⁴ and death (死). This is remarkable, as the text could easily have been abbreviated. The same pattern continues to some extent with the next set of ten discourses (EĀ 3.1 to 3.10), which expound these ten recollections in more detail. Although the differences between these ten practices naturally result in differing descriptions, so that the variations are more substantial than in the previous set of ten, nevertheless these ten more detailed expositions share a considerable amount of textual material that could easily have been abbreviated.⁵ Moreover, even parts relevant only to one topic that could have employed internal abbreviation are still given in full.⁶

The case of the first ten discourses reflects a distinct feature of the *Ekottarika-āgama*, in the form it has been preserved in Chinese translation, which is the absence of repetition series of the type found in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, as well as in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and in its *Samyukta-āgama* counterpart (T 99). Such repetition series take the form of indicating that a particular discourse should be repeated with some specific changes to be applied, such as exchanging a particular term for another one, etc. In the case of the first ten discourses, for example, adopting this pattern would have enabled giving only the first discourse in full, followed by an indication that the same discourse should be repeated by replacing the reference to recollection of the Buddha with the other nine objects of recollection.

The absence of such repetition series in the entire collection need not necessarily imply a substantial difference in reciting practices among those responsible for handing down the Indic original, compared to other collections of short discourses arranged numerically or topic-wise. The translation of the *Ekottarika-āgama* was done based on an oral recitation of the Indic text, without access to a written copy; in fact, the preface to the translation reports the loss of some of the *uddānas*, mnemonic summaries that reflect the arrangement of texts through a listing of keywords.⁷ This leaves open the possibility that the absence of repetition series could be the result of the circumstances of transmission and/or translation.

I.2 Marked Abbreviation

The standard marker of abbreviation in the part of the *Ekottarika-āgama* under investigation is 乃至, “up to,” apparently preferred over the shorter form 至 and also over the alternative 如是, “in the same way.”⁸ This differs from the abbreviations used in the first part of the

⁴ The parallel listing of the ten recollections in the corresponding section on Ones in AN 1.20.93–102 at AN I 42,9 differs insofar as it just mentions mindfulness of the body, or more literally mindfulness gone to the body, *kāyagatāsati*, without bringing in the topic of impermanence. Note that the subsequent and more detailed exposition of these ten recollections in the *Ekottarika-āgama* speaks just of mindfulness of the body, EĀ 3.9 at T II 556b20: 念身, without a reference to 非常. Another and minor difference concerns the sequence of the last four recollections, which in the Pāli list are mindfulness of breathing (7th), of death (8th), of the body (9th), and of stilling (*upasama*; 10th).

⁵ A comparable pattern can be discerned in the ninth chapter, where no abbreviation is used, even though discourses come in pairs that have considerable textual overlap: see EĀ 9.1 and EĀ 9.2, EĀ 9.3 and EĀ 9.4, EĀ 9.5 and EĀ 9.6, EĀ 9.7 and EĀ 9.8, and EĀ 9.9 and EĀ 9.10.

⁶ For example, EĀ 3.9 at T II 556c4 instructs contemplating the nature of the body, from the viewpoint of the four elements, in the following manner: 何者是身為? 地種是也? 水種是也? 火種是也? 風種是也? (for the fire element adopting the variant 也 instead of 耶). The individual questions repeated for each of the four elements could have been abbreviated; see also below note 15.

⁷ T II 549a16: 下部十五卷失其錄偈也; for a detailed study of *uddānas* in T 125 see Su 2013.

⁸ This observation refers only to the employment of 如是 as a marker of abbreviation; it does not cover other usages of the same phrase.

Madhyama-āgama, which regularly employs 如是 and also alternates between 乃至 and 至. These distinct modes of usage appear to offer yet another indication of different translation styles that distinguishes these two *Āgama* collections.⁹

An example for the employment of the abbreviation “up to” would be when a particular statement, be it a request or a confession, is made three times. After the full formulation of the first instance, the abbreviation 乃至再三 clarifies that this was repeated until reaching three instances altogether.¹⁰ The usual pattern in the early discourses is for the person to whom such repetitions are addressed to agree or accept on the third instance. In the present case, however, the Buddha’s acceptance is followed by the indication that this was also expressed 乃至三四, “up to three, four” times.¹¹ This must be a textual error, as a single acceptance would suffice and the addition of “four” after “three” fails to make sense.

I.3 Unmarked Abbreviation

Alongside the recurrent use of 乃至, the *Ekottarika-āgama* also regularly employs unmarked abbreviation. An example in case is the listing of outstanding disciples, which presents these in groups of ten. The first eminent monk is introduced with the phrase “among my disciples, the foremost monk,” 我聲聞中第一比丘, followed by mentioning the quality in which the monk was held to be outstanding and then giving his name.¹² For the next monk, the text abbreviates the above phrase and just states the quality and gives the name. The same pattern continues for the other eight members of this group. However, for starting the next group of ten monks, the above phrase is again given in full. The same pattern applies for the corresponding phrases introducing the listings of outstanding nuns (我聲聞中第一比丘尼), outstanding male lay disciples (我弟子中第一優婆塞), and outstanding female lay disciples (我弟子中第一優婆斯).¹³ The pattern of repeating the introductory phrase for every group of ten must be meant to ensure that there is no confusion about the fact that an abbreviation has occurred for the remainder of the group.

Another case of unmarked abbreviation concerns the three doors of action, in the form of recommending “purity of conduct with the body, speech, and mind” (身, 口, 意清淨之行).¹⁴ Since this phrase is very short, the abbreviation does not proceed according to the standard pattern of giving the full formula for the first and the last case but contents itself with giving it just once. The present case also shows that, even though the abbreviation is not marked, the

⁹ See Hung and Anālayo 2017 and Radich and Anālayo 2017.

¹⁰ EĀ 11.10 at T II 567c20.

¹¹ EĀ 11.10 at T II 567c22.

¹² EĀ 4.1 at T II 557a18.

¹³ A departure from this pattern through a doubling of the phrase within a group occurs when EĀ 4.7 at T II 558a25 applies the phrase 我聲聞中第一比丘, already given for the first monk in this group, again to the case of the fifth monk. Although this could be just a textual error, it could alternatively reflect the circumstance that this monk is Ānanda, in the sense that the choice of a more explicit formulation may have served as a way of expressing respect (which would be in line with the relationship established in T II 550c29 between the transmission of the *Ekottarika-āgama* and Ānanda, reflecting the high regard in which he apparently was held by the reciters of this collection). A partial repetition occurs twice: EĀ 6.4 at T II 560a24 applies the first part of the phrase 我弟子中第一優婆塞, given for the first male lay disciple, to the case of the last male lay disciple in this group, in the form 我弟子中最後受證, and EĀ 7.3 at T II 560b29 similarly applies the first part of the phrase 我弟子中第一優婆斯 to the case of the last female lay disciple in this group, in the form 我聲聞中最後取證優婆斯者. These two cases are distinct from the remainder of the listings, as they describe qualities unique to the person named, making it natural for the matter to be formulated in more detail.

¹⁴ EĀ 10.3 at T II 564b2.

context makes it clear that an abbreviation has occurred, as the reference to the “body” and “speech” fail to make sense unless they are connected to the phrase that comes after the reference to the “mind.” In other words, this type of unmarked abbreviation in a way still marks the fact that an abbreviation has occurred, namely through the truncated state of parts of the relevant passage. This makes it clear to the reciters that an abbreviation has occurred.

Interestingly, the same discourse continues just a line of text below by relating the same three doors of action to loving kindness or benevolence in the following form: “cultivate *maitrī* with the body, cultivate *maitrī* with speech, and cultivate *maitrī* with the mind” (身行慈, 口行慈, 意行慈). Somewhat unexpectedly, no abbreviation is used.

Unmarked abbreviation also occurs regularly in the *Ekottarika-āgama* parallel to the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*.¹⁵ The standard pattern of giving in full the first and last members of a particular treatment and then abbreviating those in between can also be seen, for example, in a coverage of different forms of conceiving of a self in relation to the five aggregates, where only the case of the first and the last aggregate are spelled out in full.¹⁶ Another example is a description of insight into the four (noble) truths, which takes the following form:¹⁷

One contemplates this *duḥkha*, knowing it as it really is; again, one contemplates the arising of *duḥkha*; again, one contemplates the cessation of *duḥkha*; again, one contemplates the way out of *duḥkha*, knowing it as it really is.

In the passage quoted above, the phrase “knowing it as it really is” has been abbreviated for the second and third truth, being given in full only in the first and last instance. The discourse continues by relating this vision of the four truths to gaining liberation of the mind from defilements.

II. The Significance of Unmarked Abbreviation

The topic of unmarked abbreviation calls for further examination, as the patterns evident so far suggest that this type of abbreviation is mainly applied to cases that are fairly self-evident. Moreover, in particular with longer passages, the standard procedure is to give the first and last item of a list in full, so that a clear template is in place for filling out the abbreviated part.

Based on examining cases of the gradual path in the *Madhyama-āgama* in my previous study of abbreviation, I proposed the need for caution before too quickly interpreting a particular instance as reflecting unmarked abbreviation: “it would indeed seem preferable to be cautious before concluding too readily that unmarked or silent abbreviation of a substantial amount of text not found in the same discourse” has occurred (Anālayo 2021a: 34f). In order to explore how far the same applies to the *Ekottarika-āgama* collection, in what follows I examine three individual cases from this collection from the viewpoint of whether the phrasing in question is an instance of unmarked abbreviation.

II.1 The Gradual Path

My first example is the exposition of the gradual path in the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* and its

¹⁵. An example involving an inquiry similar to the one mentioned above in note 6 can be seen in EĀ 12.1 at T II 568a24: 還觀此身有地種耶? 水, 火, 風種耶?

¹⁶. EĀ 13.4 at T II 573b10; on the different versions of this discourse see Anālayo 2016: 17–26.

¹⁷. EĀ 13.5 at T II 574b29: 彼觀此苦, 如實知之, 復觀苦習, 復觀苦盡, 復觀苦出要, 如實知之; for a comparative study of the parallel versions see Anālayo 2011a: 49–59.

parallels. MacQueen (1988: 179) reasons that, given that the gradual path account is provided in full only in the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* and abbreviated in subsequent *Dīgha-nikāya* discourses, a “reader of the Dīgha, therefore, may get the impression that this document ‘belongs to’ the Sāmaññaphala, from which source the other suttas have merely borrowed it.” As he explains, however, in the case of the *Dīrgha-āgama* extant in Chinese, the full version of the gradual path account occurs in a different discourse and for this reason is abbreviated in the subsequently occurring counterpart to the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*. This goes to show that the gradual path account “has no unique relationship to the Śrāmaṇyaphala Sūtra” (MacQueen 1988: 180). As noted by Gethin (2020: 15), in view of the indications to be gathered from the parallels, “it would seem better to consider the scheme of the [gradual] path as having no ‘original’ context, but rather as a freestanding scheme.”

Notably, the gradual path account is completely absent from the *Ekottarika-āgama* parallel to the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*. In his groundbreaking study of parallel versions of this discourse, Bapat (1948: 110 and 113) seems to consider this absence to be a case of abbreviation. Yet, the relevant passage has no marker of abbreviation, making this a less probable explanation.

As one of several arguments in support of the hypothesis that the gradual path account could be a later addition in the other versions, Meisig (1987: 37) reasons that its inclusion undermines the point made in the previous part of the discourse.¹⁸ This previous part shows other teachers failing to give a concrete reply to the question by a visiting king about visible fruits of living the life of a recluse, instead of which they are shown to proclaim their own teachings. In contrast, the Buddha is on record for giving concrete replies to this question, which indeed satisfy the king. An example for such a concrete reply, found in the *Ekottarika-āgama* version and its parallels alike, takes the form of depicting someone in the service of the king who decides to go forth. The king acknowledges that in such a situation he would offer his support to the one gone forth.¹⁹ After noting that this is another visible fruit of living the life of a recluse, the *Ekottarika-āgama* version continues as follows:²⁰

Suppose again that person, who has become a recluse, eradicates the influx of becoming, accomplishing the influx-free liberation of the mind and liberation by wisdom, and personally abides in the direct realization of knowing as it really is that birth and death have been eradicated, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, and there will be no more experiencing of becoming. What would the king wish to do?

Besides not showing any sign of abbreviation, the above passage continues smoothly along the line of the previous discussion and provides to the king another visible fruit of living the life of a recluse. Although the conclusion drawn by Meisig (1987: 37) has been criticized by Freiburger (2000: 73f note 165), it seems to me that the *Ekottarika-āgama* presentation indeed stays well within the main thrust of the contrast made in all versions between the Buddha and the other teachers. During oral transmission, a reference to arrival at

¹⁸. “Sie zerstört sogar die Pointe der Geschichte, denn der Buddha tut ja nun genau das, was der König vorher an den anderen Asketenführern bemängelt hatte.”

¹⁹. DN 2 at DN I 60,35, DĀ 27 at T I 109a24, T 22 at T I 272b24, EĀ 43.7 at T II 763c25, and the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978: 228,32.

²⁰. EĀ 43.7 at T II 764a2: 設復彼人已作沙門，盡有漏，成無漏心解脫，智慧解脫，己身作證而自遊化：生死已盡，梵行已立，所作已辦，更不復受有，如實知之。王欲何為？

the final goal, comparable to the one found in the passage translated above, could have triggered the integration of an account of the gradual path in the form in which this is now found in the other versions. By providing such a full account of the gradual path, however, the other versions end up presenting the Buddha as doing the same as the other teachers. The polemic force of their presentation thereby loses some of its force.

Whatever may be the final word on this issue, it does seem to be the case that the absence of the gradual path account in the *Ekottarika-āgama* version does not involve an abbreviation.

II.2 Similes in Conversion Formulas

The *Ekottarika-āgama* parallel to the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* reports that the Buddha's teaching led to the conversion of the king, who formally took refuge.²¹ The Pāli version precedes his taking refuge with a series of similes illustrating the effect of the Buddha's teaching to have been similar to setting upright what had been overturned, to uncovering what was covered, to showing the path to one who is lost, and to bringing a lamp into darkness so that those with eyes can see forms.²² Another two parallels extant in the *Dirgha-āgama* and in the form of an individual translation report the king's taking refuge without any simile.²³ None of the versions without similes gives the impression of involving abbreviation.

Elsewhere the *Ekottarika-āgama* does employ its versions of these similes when describing a conversion. With some minor variations typical for the diction in this collection, such descriptions tend to involve the images of showing a path, of the blind gaining vision, and of light in darkness.²⁴ However, at other times conversions are depicted without bringing in these similes (leaving aside reports of stream-entry, as these do not involve this particular set of similes).²⁵ Such briefer reports of conversion also do not give the impression of involving some form of abbreviation.

A comparable pattern can be seen in descriptions of conversion in the *Madhyama-āgama*. Particularly interesting are three discourses that occur in the same chapter of the collection (業相應品). Two discourses in this chapter, MĀ 12 and in MĀ 18, employ the illustrations of uncovering what was covered, showing a path to one who is lost, and bringing light into darkness so that those with eyes can see forms, but a discourse found between these two, MĀ 16, has only the bare formula without any simile.²⁶ The absence of similes in MĀ 16 can hardly be a matter of abbreviation, otherwise they should also have been abbreviated in MĀ 18. In fact, occurrences of the bare statement without any simile here and elsewhere in the *Madhyama-āgama* do not appear to be instances of abbreviation.

Conversion formulas in Indic language texts have recently been studied by Allon (2021: 97f), who notes that, whereas a Gāndhārī fragment from the British Library Kharoṣṭhī manuscript collection (BL 12 + 14.20–25) also has these similes, a perhaps a century later Gāndhārī fragment from the Robert Senior manuscript collection (RS 20.10–11) and a

²¹. EĀ 43.7 at T II 764a15.

²². DN 2 at DN I 85,7.

²³. DĀ 27 at T I 109b21 and T 22 at T I 276a3 (only the first object of refuge is mentioned explicitly).

²⁴. EĀ 3.5 at T II 574c25, EĀ 17.8 at T II 585a12, EĀ 31.1 at T II 666c27, EĀ 34.10 at T II 698b7, EĀ 37.8 at T II 714c9 (not followed by taking refuge or requesting ordination), EĀ 37.9 at T II 715a23, EĀ 37.10 at T II 716c10, EĀ 49.4 at T II 797a27, and EĀ 49.6 at T II 799b7.

²⁵. Examples are EĀ 32.7 at T II 680b14 and EĀ 50.10 at T II 813c21.

²⁶. MĀ 12 at T I 435a5, MĀ 16 at T I 439c17, and MĀ 18 at T I 442b10.

Sanskrit version (as reflected in the *Catuṣpariṣat-sūtra*) do not have similes.²⁷ The resultant difference can best be illustrated by juxtaposing the two Gāndhārī fragment versions in the way given by Allon (2021: 97), together with his English translation:

suyasavi bhu ghudama ñiujidu ukuje paḍichaṇo a viv(are) muḍhasa va maghu praghaṣe adhagharo aloka va <dharae> yavad eva cakṣuatu ruaṇa dhrekṣatu, evam eva ṣamaṇeṇa ghodameṇa krirṇo śukro dharmu akhade vivaḍe s(a)praghaṣide. (eṣaho) ṣamaṇo ghudamu śaraṇo ghachami dhama ca bhikhusagha ca u(asaghu) mi ṣ(a)ma(ṇe ghuda)m(e) dharedu aḥavaghreṇa yavajivu praṇouviade śaraṇo <ghade> abhiprasaṇe.

Just as, venerable Gotama, one would set upright what has been overturned or uncover what has been covered or show the path to one who is lost or bring light into the darkness, so that those with eyes might see forms, even so has the monk Gotama declared,²⁸ revealed, and proclaimed the Dharma, dark and bright. I go to the monk Gotama as a refuge and to the Dharma and to the community of monks. May the monk Gotama accept me as a layman, who with faith has gone [to him] as a refuge from today onward, for as long as there is life, until [my] last breath.

eṣao bha geḍam(a) ś(a)r(a)ṇo gachami dhrarma ja bhikhusaga ja uasao me bhi goḍama dhareṇi aḥavagreṇa yavajiva p(r)aṇueda śaraṇa gade.

I go to the venerable Gotama as a refuge and to the Dharma and to the community of monks. May the venerable Gotama accept me as a layman who has gone [to him] as a refuge from today onward, for as long as there is life, until [my] last breath.

Since the absence of the similes in the above Senior manuscript is in line with a general tendency in Senior manuscripts to abbreviate the formulaic introductory portion, Allon (2021: 99) reasons: “I suspect that the briefer form of the conversion formula found in the Senior manuscripts is similarly a manuscript abbreviation.”²⁹

Given the dating of the two Gāndhārī manuscript, the proposing of such a conclusion is certainly reasonable. However, since the passages taken up do not stem from the same text, the difference could in principle also be due to different contexts. Perhaps more importantly, there is no marking of the occurrence of abbreviation in the case of the second text.³⁰ The situation of the standard introduction to a discourse differs, as the reciters know of course what is required. Hence, even in Pāli discourses, the introduction can be abbreviated without a marker. But to do the same in the midst of a text without providing some form of indication that an abbreviation has taken place — at least leaving a somewhat truncated sentence or a phrase hanging in the air, thereby making it obvious that supplementation is called for even when an explicit abbreviation marker is missing — seems to me a less probable scenario.

This assessment can be corroborated further by turning to a conversion formula without similes in the *Bodha-sūtra* extant in Sanskrit fragments,³¹ in which case the corresponding

²⁷. On the dating of these Kharoṣṭhī manuscripts see the survey in Salomon 2014: 10.

²⁸. I would find it preferable to distinguish in the translation between *ṣamaṇa* and *bhikhu*, which could be done by rendering the former as “recluse” or “renunciant,” and using “monk” only for the latter.

²⁹. On abbreviation in Gāndhārī fragments see also Allon 2001: 27–29.

³⁰. See Allon 2001: 205 for the immediately preceding part of the fragment from the Robert Senior manuscript collection (RS 20.9), which shows that the expression of conversion indeed sets in with *eṣao bha geḍam(a)*, unlike the Sanskrit fragment version; see below note 33.

³¹. Folio 344 of the Gilgit *Dīrgha-āgama* manuscript, Silverlock 2009: 81f; British Library Sanskrit fragment Or. 15009/106 verso in Kudo 2009: 173; and SHT IV 33.28R, SHT IV 165.24V, and SHT IV 180.1R, Sander

Pāli discourse also does not have the similes.³² This appears to be deliberate. Even though the reported conversion features as the first time that the prince, to whom the discourse is addressed, hears a teaching from the Buddha and thereon expresses his going for refuge, he reports that on two former occasions others had taken refuge on his behalf. Presumably because the reciters did not consider the present instance to be a fully-fledged conversion, the Pāli and Sanskrit versions agree in presenting it without any of the similes. This shows that even in Pāli discourses the employment of the similes is not invariably applied to all instances of reporting a conversion. The same may hold for the Gāndhārī passages given above, in that the difference between them could be related to the circumstance that they stem from different texts. In the present case, the Pāli and Sanskrit versions in fact do not have any marker of abbreviation. This differs from the procedure adopted elsewhere in conversion reports in Pāli discourses, where an abbreviation of the series of similes will be marked as such.³³ This makes it fair to conclude that the absence of similes in descriptions of conversions need not reflect intentional abbreviation.

II.3 Descriptions of the Buddha's Awakening

The pattern that emerges in this way is also of relevance for evaluating the description of the Buddha's awakening in the *Ekottarika-āgama*. After covering the recollection of past lives and the divine eye, the relevant part of the discourse proceeds in this way:³⁴

Again, relying on this concentrated mind, with its flawless purity and absence of fettering tendencies, a state of mind that has attained concentration and has attained fearlessness, I attained the eradication of the influxes in the mind. And I knew that 'this is *duḥkha*' as it really is, not falsely. Then, at that time, when I had attained this mental condition, I attained liberation of the mind from the influx of sensuality, from the influx of becoming, and from the influx of ignorance. Having attained liberation, I in turn attained knowledge of liberation, knowing it as it really is that birth and death have been eradicated, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no more descent into a womb.

A particularly noteworthy feature of this description is that it only refers to insight into *duḥkha*, corresponding to the first of the four (noble) truths, rather than bringing in the whole scheme. This can be contrasted with the instance quoted earlier as an example for unmarked abbreviation, which explicitly mentions all four truths, only abbreviating the indication that insight in them involves "knowing it as it really is" for the second and third truths.

Due to lack of awareness of the way the early discourses employ abbreviation, in my comparative study of this discourse (Anālayo 2011b: 218 note 47) I unfortunately followed

and Waldschmidt 1980: 171, 197, and 213.

³² MN 85 at MN II 97,18.

³³ See, for example, SN 7.2 at SN I 163,2, SN 12.17 at SN II 21,6, or AN 4.195 at AN II 199,28. The last adopts a pattern where, after the initial *abhikkantaṃ, bhante*, the fact of abbreviation is marked with *pe*, followed by *upāsakaṃ maṃ bhante bhagavā dhāretu* etc. Perhaps a similar pattern applies to the Sanskrit fragment taken up by Allon 2021: 97: *abhikrānto 'haṃ bhadantābhikrāntaḥ. eṣo 'haṃ bhagavantaṃ śaraṇaṃ gacchāmi* etc., which could be a case where an abbreviation has taken place between *bhadantābhikrāntaḥ* and *eṣo*, with the marker having been lost or omitted by the scribe.

³⁴ EĀ 31.1 at T II 666c14: 我復以三昧心, 清淨無瑕穢, 亦無結使, 心意得定, 得無所畏, 得盡漏心, 亦知此苦如實不虛. 當我爾時得此心時, 欲漏, 有漏, 無明漏心得解脫. 已得解脫, 便得解脫智: 生死已盡, 梵行已立, 所作已辦, 更不復受胎, 如實知之 (adopting the variant 已 instead of 以); for a comparative study see Anālayo 2011b.

the lead provided by Bareau (1963: 86) and took the presentation in the *Ekottarika-āgama* version to be an instance of abbreviation. Based on my present somewhat improved understanding of abbreviations, I consider my earlier position to be mistaken. It seems to me now improbable for this to be an instance of abbreviation, as this would have been marked in some way (unless one were to assume that a portion of text with such marking has been lost).

Avoiding the easy solution of attributing the idiosyncratic presentation in this *Ekottarika-āgama* discourse to abbreviation opens up the possibility to consider it instead as a testimony to a tendency toward drawing out explicitly the implications of the Buddha's awakening. From this perspective, then, Nakamura (2000: 211) could be right in suggesting that the full set of the four noble truths in the Pāli parallel may reflect a later development compared to the *Ekottarika-āgama* version.

Needless to say, this is not to take the position that the teaching of the four truths is itself late. As already noted by Schmithausen (1981: 210): "it may seem doubtful whether ... the discovery of the four Noble Truths is a genuine reflection of what the Buddha's Enlightenment, as an experience, actually was." This does not imply, however, that the four noble truths are late in themselves, "for why shouldn't the pattern of the four Noble Truths have already existed for some period before it came to be regarded as the content of Enlightenment?" (note 36). This reasonable suggestion would find support in the description of liberating insight quoted earlier, which clearly reflects acquaintance with the four-truths scheme among the reciters of the *Ekottarika-āgama* collection.

What emerges from the above considerations, then, would be the suggestion that concrete descriptions of the actual content of the Buddha's awakening, rather than just a report of its effect in terms of eradicating the influxes and the ensuing knowledge that birth and death have been overcome, could be the result of a process of development (Anālayo 2021b). On this assumption, the *Ekottarika-āgama* version may be testifying to an interim stage in this respect that eventually led to the full formula of the four noble truths now found in its Pāli parallel.

Be that as it may, the present case is yet another instance where the assumption of unmarked abbreviation, in the absence of the provision of any indications for how the full text is to be expanded (unless this is already obvious from the context), does not seem to offer a convincing explanation.

Conclusion

The employment of abbreviation in the *Ekottarika-āgama* follows basic patterns similar to such employment in the *Madhyama-āgama* and the *Samyukta-āgama* collections, thereby testifying to similar processes at work across different traditions. Since the translation of the *Ekottarika-āgama* was based on an orally recited original, the present case testifies to the relevance of such patterns of abbreviation in the oral medium. Throughout, there appears to be an effort by the reciters to provide the information needed for subsequent expansion, unless this is self-evident. This makes it less promising an avenue for arriving at a better understanding of these text to opt for explaining a difficult or unusual textual portion as simply being a case of unmarked abbreviation.

Abbreviations

AN	<i>Āṅuttara-nikāya</i>
CBETA	Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association
DĀ	<i>Dīrgha-āgama</i>
DN	<i>Dīgha-nikāya</i>
EĀ	<i>Ekottarika-āgama</i>
MĀ	<i>Madhyama-āgama</i>
MN	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
SHT	Sanskrithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden
SN	<i>Saṃyutta-nikāya</i>
T	Taishō (CBETA)

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